
Education Committee

HB 2043

Brief Description: Establishing the recruiting diverse Washington teachers program.

Sponsors: Representatives Santos, Upthegrove, Ericks and Hasegawa.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) to develop a curriculum and guidelines for a program to encourage diverse high school students to consider a teaching career in a shortage area.
- If funding is available, authorizes the PESB to provide grants to design and deliver the program.

Hearing Date: 2/20/07

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

According to the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB), approximately 93 percent of teachers are Caucasian, compared to 74 percent of students. Approximately 13 percent of individuals who complete teacher preparation programs each year are people of color. One of the findings of a comprehensive review by the PESB of the state's teacher preparation system was a lack of a strategic recruitment approach to increasing diversity among educators. The PESB suggested that additional ways should be examined to encourage students of color to pursue a career in teaching. The Legislature enacted a minority teacher recruitment program in 1989, but it is no longer funded even though the authorizing statute remains.

One existing program for encouraging high school students to consider a career in teaching is the Washington State Teachers Recruiting Future Teachers (WSTRFT) program. The WSTRFT program is a curriculum developed in the mid 1990's that is offered as an elective in approximately 120 high schools across the state. It includes classroom observations, lesson planning, child development, and other pre-teaching activities primarily geared to elementary

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education. The WSTRFT program is not currently operated by any institution of higher education or organization; rather, it is a loose affiliation of interested educators. There is no particular emphasis on recruiting diverse teachers or recruiting teachers in shortage areas such as mathematics and science.

Summary of Bill:

The Recruiting Diverse Washington Teachers (RDWT) program is created, to be administered by the PESB. Program components include:

- targeted recruitment of diverse high school students to encourage them to consider becoming future teachers in mathematics, science, bilingual education, special education, and English as a second language;
- a curriculum that includes classroom observations and pre-teaching internships at all grade levels and covers such topics as lesson planning, learning styles, the achievement gap, and cultural competency;
- academic and community support to help diverse students overcome possible barriers to becoming a future teacher; and
- future teacher camps held on college campuses.

The PESB develops the curriculum and program guidelines in consultation with an advisory group. If funding is made available, the PESB allocates grant funds to partnerships of high schools, teacher preparation programs, and community-based organizations to design and deliver RDWT programs. The PESB must also conduct an evaluation of the effectiveness of current strategies and programs for recruiting diverse teachers in Washington and in other states.

The minority teacher recruitment program enacted in 1989 is repealed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.